



Press release

First coin with 3D Google Earth map

Prime Minister Balkenende strikes high tech five Euro coin

Utrecht, 6 April 2009 – Today Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende struck the first coin of the ‘Manhattan Fiver’. The event was hosted by secretary of state for finance Jan Kees de Jager. The new commemoration coin was struck by Royal Dutch Mint and commissioned by the ministry of finance. With the ‘Manhattan Fiver’, the Netherlands commemorate the discovery of New York, 400 years ago. The special coin was developed by using a unique and advanced technology.

Laser technology brings Google earth to coin

For the first time in history of coins, two extremely detailed three-dimensional maps are engraved on a coin. Royal Dutch Mint used an ingenious microscopic laser technology for this purpose. Coin designer Ronald van Tienhoven based the maps on satellite images by Google Earth and historical maps from the 17th century from The Wildlife Conservation Society.

Spectacular images

The coin is in many respects a spectacular item. It contains an image of the isle of Manhattan on both sides in relief. On the front Manhattan in 2009 is pictured. On the back, the situation in 1609 is pictured. The design by Van Tienhoven and the innovative laser technology, applied by Royal Dutch Mint, enables very detailed maps. Anyone with a magnifying glass or microscope can make a virtual trip through the city. Ground Zero is in bold relief and can be seen with the naked eye. The other side of the coin pictures the land of the original inhabitants: the Lenape tribe. A film on the Manhattan Fiver can be seen on YouTube.

Designer Van Tienhoven

"I have done much historical and technical research, when designing this coin," says Ronald van Tienhoven. "I am very proud of the result. This design has many aspects: the symbolism, history and modern technology, including the Google Earth satellite maps. In addition, the innovative technology that is used by Royal Dutch Mint is very special. The maps have more than one layer and get a tangible relief in this way. All these aspects come together in this coin and strengthen each other."

Availability

The 'Manhattan Fiver' can be exchanged for 5 Euros as of 6 April at all post offices or via the website www.herdenkingsmunt.nl. Additionally, Royal Dutch Mint will strike a number of collector editions: a silver 'Manhattan Fiver' with collector's quality worth 30,95 euro, and a golden 'Manhattan Tenner', worth 224,95 euro.

About Royal Dutch Mint

Royal Dutch Mint is the only manufacturer of official Dutch coins. These are made in Utrecht since 1567. Royal Dutch Mint is one of the oldest companies in the Netherlands. It is not only an experienced manufacturer of coins, but also a technological innovator with vast knowledge on coin manufacturing. A striking example is the cooperation with designer Ronald van Tienhoven and Google Earth for the manufacturing of the 'Manhattan Fiver'. Royal Dutch Mint is also a regular manufacturer of foreign circulation coins for non-European countries.

Note to the editor:

Enclosed, find the detailed document of Ronald van Tienhoven's design.

For more images and information, please contact the Royal Dutch Mint's pr agency:

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